



*MaineDOT Photo Lab*

### ***Safety Management High on MaineDOT Agenda***

Established in response to a 1991 federal mandate, the Department's Safety Management program, housed in the Systems Management Division of the Bureau of Planning, continues to innovate as it administers a growing number of Department safety efforts. The Safety Management Section's mission is to develop a comprehensive approach to reduce the frequency and severity of crashes on Maine's transportation system. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funds support much of the safety team's programming. Highway safety is an increasingly important public policy concern for Maine. The number of highway crash fatalities in Maine this year is significantly higher than it was at this time a year ago. FHWA estimates that the cost of highway crashes, mainly in lost productivity, exceeds \$1 billion per year for the Maine economy. Among the programs and initiatives of the Safety Management Section are:

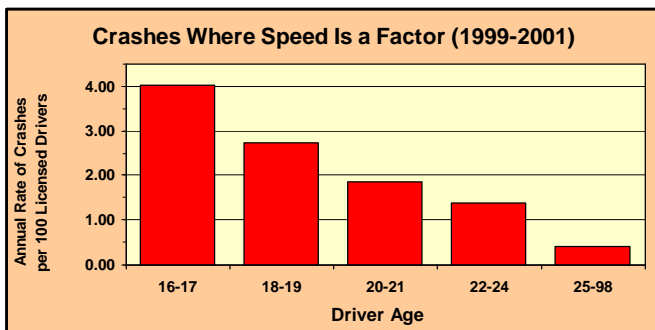
- **Planning** - The Safety Management Section plays the key role in developing the safety aspects of the Six-Year Transportation Improvement Plan and the Twenty-Year Plan, the Department's main planning documents. Staff subsequently prioritizes and recommends specific improvements for the Biennial Transportation Improvement Program.

- **Hazard Elimination Program (HEP)** - The HEP is a federally funded highway safety program that addresses locations with high frequency and severity of crashes, where road geometry or traffic control are contributing factors. The program provides a total of \$4.9 million per biennium to address a number of highway safety improvement projects, (generally costing less than \$500,000).
- **Guardrail Improvements** - The Department has dedicated \$1 million of HEP funds per biennium in recent years to improving guardrails. Guardrail treatments on the most important "National Highway System" roads are nearly complete. MaineDOT will now move on to the needs on the next-higher level of highways.
- **Grade-Crossing Improvements** - In line with a federal requirement, Safety Management devotes \$2 million of federal aid per biennium to safety improvements at highway-railroad intersections. The program funds purchases of safety equipment such as warning lights and barriers, as well as the construction of surface (road) improvements at the railroad crossings.
- **Safety Incentive Funds Program** - Through compliance with federal requirements for drunk-driving laws and other policy objectives, Maine secures funding for innovative efforts like bicycle safety training, a media safety campaign, driver-activated signs, flagger training, and other non-traditional safety programs. The Department shares these funds with the Department of Public Safety.
- **Driver Awareness** - With its "Be a Road Model" campaign and its trademark stoplight character "Flash", the Department is working with Maine television stations and other media outlets to promote driver responsibility, and to improve awareness of highway safety issues like speed, driver inattention, and workzone safety.



- **Education** - In recent years, the Safety Management team has increased Department safety efforts in schools by developing curricula, downloadable games and other classroom tools on [www.mainebackseatdriver.com](http://www.mainebackseatdriver.com), and an annual contest for fourth-graders to design slogans and signs for Workzone Safety Awareness Week, a national observance that takes place in April.

- **Maine Transportation Safety Coalition** - MaineDOT staff plays a central role in this non-profit organization which includes the FHWA, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), several state agencies, and other safety advocates. The group shares information and strategies for creating a safer transportation system.



- **Interagency Task Force on Young Driver Safety** - MaineDOT is working with the Department of the Secretary of State, the Department of Public Safety, and other agencies to explore measures to reduce the number of young driver deaths on Maine highways. The group will assess seatbelt use, speed, driver inattention, alcohol use, time-of-day and other data, and develop strategies to reduce injuries and deaths.

- **“Crashes Involving Large Animals”** - Safety Management is working with other MaineDOT offices and state agencies to develop a map and brochure that highlights the dangers of moose and other large animals crossing highways, and that identifies methods to reduce crashes with animals.

- **Crash Outcome Data Evaluation System (CODES)** - MaineDOT staff works with the Maine Health Information Center and other state agencies in this NHTSA initiative, which works to identify the medical outcomes of crash events.

- **Municipal Comprehensive Plans** - Staff provides safety data to municipalities for their use in the development of comprehensive plans.

*mark your calendar for the*

**52<sup>nd</sup> Annual  
Maine Transportation Conference  
Thursday, December 5th**

### **Study Highlights Regional Freight System Needs**

A Northeast Association of State Transportation Officials (NASTO) Freight Service and Investment Study, managed jointly by the Maine and New York State DOTs, was published in August. The project, conducted in cooperation with the New England Governors/Eastern Canada Premiers Trade and Globalization Committee, looks at the freight transportation and economic characteristics of the Northeast region. Some of the study recommendations include making truck-size-and-weight limits and truck-permitting processes more consistent throughout the region, and improving the quantity and quality of data on freight transport in the region. The report is the most comprehensive inventory to date of the Northeast region's freight transportation infrastructure, regulations, trends, and issues, and will support a regional agenda for reauthorization of TEA-21, the six-year federal surface transportation law, when it expires in 2003.



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### ***Transportation Building Renovations on Track***

Work on the Transportation Building in Augusta is slightly ahead of schedule, which may mean the Department can reoccupy its Child Street headquarters earlier than the “substantial completion date” of the renovation contract, which is mid-June of 2003. Heating, ventilation, air conditioning, and sprinkler systems have been fully installed, and sheetrocking, painting, and electrical work is now in progress.

Work has also begun on the exterior walls of the ground floor. Contractor H.E. Sargent of Old Town anticipates installation of the steel cladding will begin in early October, and the building will be sealed and ready for cold weather. MaineDOT is also finalizing workstation layouts so that the partitions and workstations can be procured. The renovations will update the 1970s-era structure, increasing energy efficiency and ridding the building of air-quality problems and mold.

### ***Draft of Next Six-Year Plan Due in October***

The Bureau of Planning expects to finalize a draft of "The MaineDOT Six-Year Plan for Fiscal Years 2004-2009" in October. The Six-Year Plan is published every two years. The Plan outlines the Department's major policy initiatives and lists the capital improvement projects MaineDOT expects to include in its next three Biennial Transportation Improvement Programs (BTIPs), which are project-based and fiscally constrained. As in prior years, the draft Plan will be a medium-timeframe document that connects the Department's resource allocation policy with its federally required long-range plan, the "Twenty-Year Transportation Plan." Statewide informational meetings about the Plan are expected in November. Those interested in a copy of the Six-Year Plan may request one from the Bureau of Planning at 624-3300. It will also be available on the MaineDOT website at <http://www.state.me.us/mdot/planning/planningdiv/spc.htm>.

### ***MaineDOT Wrapping Up Federal Fiscal Year***

September 30<sup>th</sup> marks completion of the 2002 federal fiscal year, the most productive in many years for the Department's delivery of federally funded highway, bridge, and multi-modal construction projects. As of September 1<sup>st</sup>, the Bureau of Project Development projected that it will deliver over 300 projects, worth more than \$240 million, to "start of construction" in the 12-month period. This compares to an average of 180 projects per year, worth \$146 million, over the last five fiscal years. The Bureau's outlook for 2003 is for even greater production, as 380 projects valued at more than \$260 million are planned for the coming fiscal year, including 330 miles of highway improvements and highway resurfacing on already-built arterial and collector roads. Meanwhile, MaineDOT's Bureau of

Maintenance and Operations has completed its 2002 "Hot Maintenance Mulch" paving program. This year, 756 miles was paved using more than 387,000 tons of material. The mulch program applies light paving to certain State and State-Aid Highways, providing a drivable surface until a road can be reconstructed to standard.



*MaineDOT Office of Freight Transportation*

### ***New Calais Bridge/Crossing Gets Green Light***

The State of Maine and the Province of New Brunswick have agreed on the future location of a new border crossing within the Town of St. Stephen and the City of Calais. The crossing will be located near the Calais Industrial Park. The location, one of six initial alternatives, was selected because it will have the fewest negative economic impacts, bypass effects, and community and social impacts. The location received strong support from the City of Calais and the Town of St. Stephen. The decision to locate the crossing at the Industrial Park site was made in accordance with federal, provincial, and state procedures. The Calais crossing has been discussed for more than 25 years. Today, Calais is the eighth busiest border-crossing location between the U.S. and Canada, and has been increasingly subject to traffic delays and backups. "The new crossing will provide the necessary facilities to improve security while at the same time facilitating trade between our two countries," said Maine Governor Angus S. King and New Brunswick Premier Bernard Lord in a joint statement.

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# MaineDOT Employees of the Month

July 2002



## Michael Drolet

*Information Support  
Systems Specialist -  
Winthrop*

Mike Drolet started as an Information Systems Support Technician at MaineDOT in May 2000, and has since been promoted to Information Systems Support Specialist. One nominator explained that, "Mike's style includes strong organizational and planning skills, a 'zany' sense of humor, and excellent interpersonal skills." Another said, "He works to utilize the most efficient method of accomplishing the work, even to the point of developing improved methods and sharing them with coworkers." A final comment was, "Mike deals with customers in a manner which makes them feel comfortable and respected, often difficult to do in stressful situations when a customer's computer is not working, yet their job needs to be accomplished quickly."

August 2002



## Brenda Vigue

*Account Clerk II -  
Bureau of Maintenance  
and Operations - Winthrop*

Brenda Vigue might be called a MaineDOT "newcomer", since she's been with the Department just since September 1999. Her nomination describes her as "very positive," and as someone with a "can do/will do attitude". It goes on to say: "She's willing to take on any task and loves to learn new jobs. Brenda often goes above and beyond what is asked of her to make sure someone else has an easier time performing their duties". Other comments included, "When her often-busy workload is caught up, she doesn't hesitate to offer assistance," and, "Brenda is very considerate of her co-workers," and "She is a pleasure to work with." Another nominator declared, "Not only is she a huge asset to the Bureau of Maintenance and Operations, she's a huge asset to MaineDOT in general."

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